

Autobiographical Sketch - Vichai Malikul*

Vichai Malikul, the first of two children, was born in Bangkok, Thailand on June 10, 1943. His father was an official in the Interior Ministry Department. From an early age, he enjoyed drawing portraits and scenery. His mother gave him the most encouragement for his art work and often suggested mammals, birds or insects as appropriate subjects for drawing. When she asked if he wanted to become an artist when he grew up, his reply was strongly positive. During high school, photography became a second interest. With the encouragement of his teachers, friends and family, he entered art and photographic work in a contest among high school students in Bangkok.

He often uses his photographs of people and animals as a subject for illustration. His earliest drawing technique was the use of grid lines on a photograph and enlarged grid lines on drawing paper to assure accurate proportions. This procedure and the carbon dust technique were used by the Chinese artists that he often observed in a downtown studio. As a self-taught illustrator, he acquired various skills such as carbon dust (mixed with lead pencil), water color, pen and ink half-tone wash, and brush and ink. The latter was most fascinating to him and he became adept at drawing fine lines with a brush. This procedure is now used for most of his scientific illustrations of adult insects.

After high school graduation in 1962, Mr. Malikul sought employment as an artist. Through a relative, Dr. Somthas Malikul, he heard of a new illustrator position available at the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) Medical Laboratory in Bangkok. He was introduced to Major John E. Scanlon, who was chief of the Department of Medical Entomology of the U. S. Component of the laboratory. Having successfully demonstrated his competence to Major Scanlon by drawing a rat skull and an adult mosquito, he was hired as a biological illustrator.

During the first year at SEATO, he assisted Mr. Kitti Thonglongya (who later became a well-known mammalogist) in collecting and mounting study specimens of small mammals and birds. In addition, he collected mosquitoes in biting collections and light traps, learned mosquito rearing techniques and adult pinning procedure. He worked as a collector for nearly two years until he received a new assignment to illustrate certain species of *Culex* (*Lophoceraomyia*) for Mr. Manop Rattanarithikul. From then on, he drew mosquitoes. In early 1965, Mr. Malikul and Mr. Sorasak Invitaya, another illustrator at the laboratory, made illustrations for the "Illustrated key to the female *Anopheles* mosquitoes of Thailand" by E. L. Peyton and J. E. Scanlon. This key was published in Bangkok in 1966.

In June 1967, he left SEATO laboratory in order to further his art education in the United States. While there, he accepted a position as a scientific illustrator in the Southeast Asia Mosquito Project (SEAMP) [presently Medical Entomology Project (MEP)] at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.

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His first task was to make corrections and additions to drawings of *Anopheles* previously prepared by other illustrators. This was followed by work on adult and immature species of *Heizmannia* and *Aedes* (*Finlaya*) for Drs. Peter F. Mattingly and Kenneth L. Knight, respectively. In his spare time, he continued formal art studies at local schools.

From 1968 through 1977, he worked with Dr. Yiau-Min Huang, largely concentrating on *Aedes* (*Stegomyia*). He has illustrated two monographs and 22 shorter publications for Dr. Huang. In June 1973, Dr. Huang described *Aedes* (*Stegomyia*) *malikuli*, a new species from Chiangmai, Thailand, in his honor. During this period, he has illustrated other genera and subgenera including *Aedes* (*Ayurakitia* and *Aedimorphus*) and *Culex* (*Culex* and *Melanoconion*).

One of his illustrations of *Aedes aegypti* was used for the cover of *Mosquito Systematics* in 1972 and another of *Ae. (Stegomyia) w-albus* will be used in 1978. In 1976, a full color adult habitus drawing of *Toxorhynchites brevipalpis* was exhibited at the International Congress of Entomology. This will also be on display at the National Museum of Natural History during 1978. Other illustrations have been displayed at various universities and institutions in the U. S. and in recent years (1975-77), he has been awarded prizes for some of his photographs submitted for exhibit at the Smithsonian Resident Associates program. Since 1975, he has given lectures and demonstrations of his technique for line and wash half-tone drawing at the U. S. Department of Agriculture Graduate School and various entomological meetings.

Mr. Malikul has assumed additional responsibilities at MEP since the retirement of Mrs. Thelma Ford Smith in May 1977. In November 1975, he became an American citizen. He studied advertising art as a part-time student at the National Art Academy in Washington, D. C. and graduated from Montgomery College, Rockville, Maryland with a major in illustration and photography. Other professional activities involve membership in the Guild of National Science Illustrators and the Photographic Society of America.

On March 6, 1968, he married Miss Phaung Thong Fuangaron in Washington, D. C. at the Thai Embassy. They have two daughters Penny and Pearl, and now live in Wheaton, Maryland. Mrs. Malikul is currently a technician at the University of Maryland School of Medicine and works with Colonel Robert Traub on the Siphonaptera project at the Smithsonian Institution.